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9 July 2026

Changes to Free School Meal Entitlements and Prices for September 2026

Dear Parent/Carer,

Please be aware that from September 2026, the Government will introduce substantial changes to Free School Meal (FSM) eligibility. Under the new national criteria, all families in receipt of Universal Credit will qualify for free school meals, meaning that more students will become eligible.

Therefore, from September 2026, there will be two categories of benefit-related FSM.

1. **Targeted Free School Meals:**

This category continues to be based on the existing income threshold. Students will be eligible if their household;
• Is in receipt of Universal Credit, and
• Has an annual household income of £7,400 or less.

Only students eligible for Targeted FSM will;
• Be eligible for extended rights home to school transport, subject to the eligibility criteria for extended rights travel.

2. Expanded Free School Meals:

This category applies to school meals only and covers pupils who:
• Live in households receiving Universal Credit, and
• Do not meet the income threshold for Targeted FSM (i.e. the annual household income is above £7,400).
Pupils eligible for Expanded FSM will be eligible to free school meals only.

If you have become eligible for either of the above categories then **your child will only receive free school meals if you have applied for them**.

Please do not miss out on support that you may be entitled to for your child please seek further guidance at
https://www.northlincs.gov.uk/schools-libraries-and-learning/school-food-and-free-school-m

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From September 2026 a meal deal will be increasing to £3.45 per day for a meal and a dessert and individual items will be increasing by 4.5% due to cost of living rises. In line with the new Government school food standards a drink is no longer part of the deal. Please send your child with a reusable water bottle that can be filled from the water fountains in the dining hall. Drinks will also be available to purchase at an additional cost.

Yours faithfully,

Tracy Motson
Principal
Outwood Academy Foxhills